The Seed Sower.

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"Sad in the Sweet Air."

"Triste fummo nell' aer dolce che dal sol s'allegra,
portando dentro accidioso fummo."
—*Inf. VIII., 121.*

One only thing denied, and life, we cry, is blank;
One cloud across the sun, and sweetest air is dank;
One little candle quenched, and all our world grows dark,—
Ah, Lord! if Thou wert strict our foolishness to mark!

The sweet air cheers us not, we scorn the sun's glad rays;
In vain regrets we lose the long, calm summer days;
Our rebel thoughts for ever dwell upon Thy chastening rod,
Nor lift one joyous note to sing Thy praise, O God!

In vain Thy ceaseless care protects the path we tread,
In vain each newborn day brings with it daily bread;
Proudly we turn our face from all the mercies left,
And cry in futile wrath, "We are of all bereft!"

Ah, with Thy wayward ones have patience, Lord, we pray!
Nor in Thy book record the foolish words we say
When from our lives some joy Thou dost in wisdom take,
Write them not down against us, Lord, for Christ's dear sake!

Olassio. JESSIE LEETE.

The Orestean Trilogy of Æschylus.

ACTS xvii. 27-8.

In these words Paul appeals to a well-known doctrine of Greek religion in support of his teaching. It is significant of much that Paul, in choosing an authority which he knew his hearers would respect, quotes the language not of a priest but of a poet. For good or for ill the religion of Greece differed from almost every other ancient religion in having no priestly caste. Of course, Greece had its priests, but they never obtained a dominant ascendency, and were never able to stereotype their opinions or prevent the free play of ideas among the people. There was a freedom of growth in the religion of Greece quite remarkable. As an historical fact, Greek religion—the contribution of Hellas to the spiritual life of humanity, was not through priestly codes, ritual or books, but by the voices of poets, orators, philosophers—especially the poets. It is in Homer, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, it is in Aristotle and Plato, we must look for any adequate picture and account of the mind of Greece on the great things of religion. The priesthood was quite secondary. Soldiers, statesmen, and the common people offered

sacrifices and prayers as well as the priests. The teachers of the people were the great poets. It is therefore with confidence Paul appeals to their poetry when speaking to an audience at Athens.

To-day if I ask you to consider with me the religious teaching of the great Greek poem, the "Orestean Trilogy" of Æschylus, I shall be following in some sort Apostolic precedent. One is all the more justified by the fact that Greek thought has so largely entered into Christianity, and men have found in Greek religion and philosophy another schoolmaster leading the world to Christ. The religion of Greece and the religion of Christendom have been, from the first, silently intermingling and intermarrying, so that we can no longer separate them, Grecian thinkers often supplying some instrument for illumination or some element of ethics to the Christian system, so that the church of to-day can scarcely distinguish which portion of the truth has been derived from an Apostolic and which from a Grecian source.

My subject of to-day has been suggested by the very remarkable and beautiful production by Mr. Benson, during the Shakespeare Festival at Stratford-on-Avon, those three dramas in one—"The Agamemnon," "The Libation Pourers," and "The Furies," known as "The Orestean Trilogy." It was eminently fitting that the shades of Æschylus and Shakespeare, the world's two supreme dramatists, should greet each other at Stratford. Mr. Benson's devotion to art, his long and splendid effort to elevate the stage and present the drama as the poetic interpretation of life, his faith that the public are not insensible to the loftiest inspirations of poetic genius when presented in a spirit at once artistic and reverent, have never been more fully shown than in this courageous production of the masterpiece of Æschylus. The greatest praise that can be offered to Mr. Benson and his Company is to say that the representation was not unworthy of the great subject. It was a thoughtful and impassioned performance, and left one deeply impressed by the vivid light it threw upon two or three of the profoundest ideas of Greek religion.

The story of the play, or plays, is derived from one of the old legends of Greece coming down from pre-historic times, and told by half-a-dozen of her poets, from Homer onwards, in different ways and with many variations. Here are the bare bones of the story as told by Æschylus:—

Paris, the son of Priam, on a visit to the King of Sparta, Agamemnon's brother, had basely wronged his host by enticing his wife, Helen, to leave her lord and flee with him to Troy. Agamemnon joined his brother in fitting out an expedition to wreak vengeance on Troy. A thousand vessels were equipped, and set sail under the command of Agamemnon. Overtaken by a furious storm, it became necessary, according to the then accepted notion of the Greek religion, to appease the gods by the sacrifice of what was most precious to the leader of the expedition. Agamemnon had brought with him his favourite daughter, Iphigenia, and she, his most precious possession, was deemed the acceptable offering, and perished on the altar. The storm abating, the fleet passed safely on to Troy, which Agamemnon besieged for a period of nearly ten years. At the end of that time Troy was taken and razed to the ground, Paris killed, and Agamemnon returned home, his people laden with spoils, and he himself bringing with him Cassandra as his concubine. But during his ten years' absence things had not been well at home. Clytemnestra, Agamemnon's wife, tired of her lord's delay, had become unfaithful to the inviolable sanctities of the marriage tie, and had taken Ægisthus for a lover. On Agamemnon's return the two guilty ones contrive a plot to kill him, and Agamemnon is cruelly done to death by his own wife, and she and Ægisthus reign in Agamemnon's place.

In the second act, or drama, called "Libation Pourers," Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, who had been sent away on his father's death to the care of a neighbouring king, now grown to man's estate, went to ask counsel of the gods at Delphi, who straitly charge him to take vengeance on his father's murderers. Starting on his journey, accompanied by his trusty friend Pylades, they arrive in due time at his mother's palace, where they find his younger sister, Electra, offering libations on his father's tomb. For it chanced that the day before he arrived the gods sent Clytemnestra a fearful dream, namely, that she had given birth to a serpent, who had suckled blood at her breast, and in her terror she sent Electra, with her handmaidens, to offer this act of appeasement to Agamemnon's soul, and to propitiate the

powers that rule over the dark world of the dead. Orestes at the tomb vows his mother's death, and soon after is himself the executioner of the guilty woman.

In the third part of the Trilogy, called the Eumenides, the avenging Furies of the underworld, the Erinyes, appear to Orestes, who is already filled with remorse for the murder of his mother, and make his life a torment and a misery, giving him no rest, but hunting him like fierce and greedy hounds from land to land. Racked in brain and heart, Orestes can find no place from accusing voices. Driven almost to despair, he at last appeals to the gods, and Apollo and Pallas Athene between them provide a way of rescue, and the pursuing Furies are turned into Blessings.

1. Now the first thing of religious significance emerging from this fearful tragedy is the Greek idea of the Nemesis which follows all wrong-doing. But here for the first time in Greek poetry Nemesis is tempered at the end by a diviner power. In earlier Greek poems we find Justice, in the shape of Vengeance, revered with something of the zeal of Hebrew prophecy. In Æschylus we have the first clear conception of a Justice whose emphasis is not on vengeance but on equity. A divine righteousness appears on the scene. The law of retribution is inherent in all noble tragedy, but in his treatment of the Orestean legend the poet pierces through the superficial view of Justice as "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" and while he is profoundly aware that the consequences of human conduct spread far beyond any single life, even to children's children and the world around, his sense of individual responsibility is also clear and strong, he feels there must, in the very nature of Justice, come an end to the sufferings of children for their fathers' sins. We are indeed a long way from the Christian doctrine of repentance and forgiveness—that stage had not been reached in Judea—but we are also a long way from mere revenge. On the one hand we see how apparently endless are the consequences flowing from one single sin. The crime of Paris against household purity leads to war and shipwreck and the sacrifice of the innocent Iphigenia and the sacking of Troy, with the death not only of Paris, but of hosts of his followers. But the long absence of Agamemnon from home has given opportunity there for treachery and unfaithfulness, and to cover it up Agamemnon is slain. That leads on to the avenging of his father by Orestes, and it seems as if the chain of tragic consequences would never come to an end. Nemesis is still in full cry. Here, however, another note is heard. The poet, painting the struggle between good and evil with unique vividness, has a sublime faith in the ultimate triumph of Good. The growth of justice is with him a process from mere revenge to humanity, from war to peace, in which the human will bears an essential part by conforming itself to the divine. The God above all gods in the heavenly hierarchy is Zeus. Now in an earlier drama, the Promethean Trilogy, Æschylus represents Zeus as ruling in the might of despotic sovereignty, a power whom men could not resist, but also and alas! could not love. In the Agamemnon the poet has grown wiser. The sovereignty of Zeus is represented as that which brings blessing to the world; trust in him leads to peace; the pain which he permits is the only way to wisdom.

Zeus—by what name soe'er
He glories, being addressed,
Even by that holiest name
I name the Highest and the Best:
On him I cast my troublous care,
My only refuge from despair;
Weighing all else, in him alone I find
Peace to the care and burden of the mind.

Zeus, who prepared for men
The path of wisdom, binding fast
Learning to suffering.
In sleep
The mind is visited again
With memory of affliction past.
Without the will, reflection deep
Reads lessons that perforce shall last.
And this, too, comes from grace of gods
Seated in might above their awful thrones.

It is not blind revenge, nor cruel, unheeding Fate which inflicts punishment on Paris and Clytemnestra.

Yes, one may say, 'tis Zeus whose blow they feel;
This, one may clearly trace:
They fared as he decreed:
Yea, one there was who said,
"*The gods deign not to care for mortal men*
By whom the grace of things inviolable
Is trampled under foot."
No fear of God had he,
But to the children it is manifest
Of those, who, overbold,
Breathed wrongful lust against the law of Right,

Their houses overfilled with precious store
Above the golden mean.
Ah! let our lives be free from all that hurts,
So that for one who gains
Wisdom in heart and soul,
That lot may be enough.
Since still there is no bulwark strong in wealth
Against destruction's doom,
For one who in the pride of Wantonness
Spurns the great altar of the Just and Right.

That surely is a great instruction. No wealth, no abundance of precious store, no proud position can preserve from their doom those who trample underfoot the grace of things inviolable, the sanctities of hospitality and the marriage tie, and spurn the great altar of the Just and Right!

2. And yet the poet feels that the endless chain of consequences, crime following upon crime, crime leading to crime in unbroken succession, cannot be, must not be, the conclusion of the whole matter. Somewhere, somehow, there must be a possibility of cutting off the entail of sin, the possibility of a new start, of cleansing from the curse. So Orestes is led through a fearful experience until his soul is set free from its burden of woe, and the avenging Furies who have relentlessly pursued him are changed into Beneficent Goddesses. The devices of the poet by which this is accomplished—the vote of the citizens of Athenæ's town and the new home promised for the Furies, and so on, strike the modern mind as all very crude and inadequate. Again, I remind you we are not yet in Christian times, but we have here the poet "dimly feeling" after something greater than he knew how to describe, something he knew not how to express in words, namely, the possibility of a new birth, a regeneration of the soul, a cleansing from stain, a relief from the burden of the past, with a new and brighter future for the sin-laden, sorrow-stricken mind.

The purpose of tragedy, Aristotle said, is by the operation of pity and fear in the hearers to purify these and similar passions, and at last to bring them into calmness and self-control. This view supposes a God* who is the author of the tragedy of human life, who developes it to an end of peace, who leads men at last into tranquility, and changes the Furies into Blessings. In the greater poets of Greece, in Æschylus and Sophocles, there appears at the last Eternal Justice, solemn, consoling and satisfying, to bring the storm to a close, and start man on an upward path. "God and not Fate is at the helm of life."

What a great thing it is for us to see, on so large a scale, God teaching men apart from our special revelation, and to find in that other teaching light thrown upon some of the deepest problems of life and living. The Gospel of Christ was in the far future, and Æschylus was dealing with questions and solutions from another and earlier point of view; yet everyone can see that there is here no contradiction of the Gospel, but only one of the stages leading up to the higher vision. The God of Æschylus must come before the God of Christ. But just as the poet teaches men that in their sins and sorrows they must throw themselves on the justice of God, so Christianity teaches they must throw themselves on the love of a Heavenly Father. The Greek did not know that Love is greater than Justice, and includes it. But it was much for him to come to the faith that there must be a divine and good end to all, and that all this mighty sum of things, with all its tragedy, madness, sin, and passion, must issue at last in the victory of the Just and Right. That faith, both for him and for us, is the secret of a peace which passeth understanding.

JOSEPH WOOD.

* *See* Mr. Stopford Brooke's sermon on "The Secrets of Life."

"To-morrow."

No fresh'ning sweetness hath the wind,
Grey mists enfold the sky;
To-day all nature seems unkind,
I know not why.

But, howsoever drear to-day,
To-morrow will be bright,
And sure this gloom will pass away,
As doth the night.

My spirit sobs with heavy pain,
And faint of heart am I;
To-day my mind seeks peace in vain,
I know not why.

But all the sadness of to-day
To-morrow will redeem,
And sorrow sure will pass away,
As doth a dream.

J. DRINKWATER.

The Philosophy of Holiday-making.

The true philosophy of holiday-making was discovered by that miller's horse, which, being obliged for six days of the week to go round and round from right to left, always spent Sunday in going round and round from left to right. It is in the doing something we do not generally do, in reversing the order of our proceedings, and so refreshing our physical or mental muscles, that the essence of a holiday is to be found. Complete rest and stillness of mind and body would be a holiday only to the man who was absolutely tired out in every faculty of both the one and the other. So long as we have any power yet fresh, it is in the employment of that faculty wherein we find the most complete repose from other fatigue. The fact is useful to remember for two reasons: first, as a guide to our own speediest refreshment; and second, to help us to a little of that indulgence for other people's holiday-making which seems the most difficult achievement of philanthropy.

To see people pleased in *our* way, and to be gracious and sympathetic with their enjoyment, is just possible to the well-constituted mind; but to see people heartily pleasing themselves in a way which is *not* ours, and of which the very idea is nauseous to us, is nothing short of the climax of Christian charity. Gouty old grandpapa beams benevolence on Master Tommy while that hopeful scion of his house sits stuffing at dessert; but when he proceeds to jump up and romp with the little barking terrier round the room and under grandpapa's chair, that venerable character is apt to send him to bed with the singular entomological study which he denominates "a flea in his ear." To see anybody dropping to sleep in the midst of the discourse of our favourite preacher; or beginning a hearty dinner at the soup and fish when we have reached our final cup of coffee; or sailing on a rough sea for pleasure when we feel that our "souls would sicken o'er the heaving wave;" or going into ecstasies over a book we have found dull and silly—to behold all these aggravating things, and yet be able to rejoice with those who do rejoice so very unnecessarily, this is to have transcended ordinary humanity. Above all, does it seem impossible for those elevated souls whose habitual dwelling (if we may believe their own account) is in the upper air of sweetness and light, to sympathise with, or indeed tolerate, vulgar enjoyments which are the natural and easily attainable enjoyments of homely people. That poor fellow of whom Miss Marsh tells us, whose idea of heaven was "a warm parlour with a fiddle going outside" —where is the refined musical *dilettante* who will desire to contemplate his paradise across any gulf over which the sounds of that fiddle may be wafted? Look at that Cockney family, going off for a "day's pleasure," the fat father, the mother laden with comestibles, the daughter giggling so frightfully, and "her young man" bearing the blue cotton pocket-handkerchief, wherein, it is but too probable, a pork pie is borne for consumption in the grounds of Hampton Court. Is it with sentiments of good-humoured sympathy, or with something nearer to disgust at their uproarious enjoyment, that the "highly cultured" gentleman—as Yankee exquisites say—is gazing after them? If they were drowning in the Thames he would pull off his coat and risk his life to swim to them, and save that giggling young woman, and even her obese and provision-laden mamma. But, as they are perfectly well and happy, their enjoyment is just a little trying to his nerves.

Now, after all, the principle of the miller's horse should put all this to rights. Just inasmuch as six days of A are spent going one way, and the six days of B in going another, so A's seventh-day holiday must needs be taken in some other day than the holiday of B. To the rustic whose years are passed among turnips, the greatest pleasure in life is a day spent at the fair in the mean little country town which to him represents the metropolis of human civilisation. To the Cockney who dwells for ever amid smoke and noise, and surrounded by houses, the sight of green fields and the breath of pure air is the very ideal of refreshment. The landsman longs for the seaside; the seaman for inland lanes and woods. The young girl just out of her school-room accepts her first invitation as if every gathering of human beings in evening dresses were glorious as Hans Breitmann's "barty." The statesman who has enjoyed for twenty years the choicest society which the world can offer sighs all the session long for the hour when he

shall follow a pack of grouse over a lonely moor. That "gluttonous despot," as Byron called George IV. once, when Prince Regent, went to dine with the Earl of Arran, in Bath, at rather short notice. Those were days when markets were either supplied from the next port or not supplied at all; and as the weather had been stormy, there was actually no fish to be obtained. Lord Arran, at his wits' end, presented the Regent with a dish of red herrings. Royalty tasted, and marvelled "what *was* that delicious fish which he had never seen before, and of which his nefarious cooks had hitherto bereft him the enjoyment?" There is no more stupid, and, in the strictest sense, more vulgar mistake, than that of the fine gentleman of whom we have spoken, namely, that pleasures, to be of value, need to be rare, or reserved for those who can pay heavy prices for them. These exquisites themselves do not hold their dull idea abroad, but sit and enjoy their cup of coffee or their plate of strawberries on the benches of the little German *Garten-wirthschaft*, as they would deem it utterly impossible to do in an English suburban tea-garden. Of course it is not pleasant for people in clean clothes to be jostled by those in dirty garments; and the filthy tobacco, beloved by the British artisan, very literally, and without any fine-ladyism, gives the woman not inured to it a headache after five minutes' propinquity. Southerners neither use such atrocious stuff, nor crowd, when they can help it, upon other people. It is possible often to walk through an Italian city when the streets are swarming with the whole population, and never be so much as touched by the dress of man or woman, and it is devoutly to be wished that a little more courtesy and a little better smoking material could be made popular in England. But such changes—and others much more important—will not be helped by the refined sarcasms of that class which finds its mouthpiece in the "Saturnine Review." A little honest sympathy with the holiday-making of those who most need holidays, and some regard to what we have called the system of the Miller's Horse in providing for their holidays, would be much more to the purpose.

Carrying the same principle into all amusements, it is obvious that in seeking what is to be real relaxation for any class or age, we must not look *in the line* of their ordinary pursuits, but in the precisely opposite direction. He who spends his days in head-work—give him cricket for his play. He who toils in ugly workshops, take him to the theatre which has the most gorgeous scenery and decorations. Give the needlewoman a walk in the Zoological Gardens. Make the ploughman read a sensational romance. Take the philosopher, and engage him to play with a little toy in white muslin not exceeding five years old, who (like poor Pet Marjory and Walter Scott) will compel him to repeat "Dickory Dock" by the hour together. This is the allœopathic treatment of fatigue, by contraries. The homœopathic system of "like curing like," only answers for patients who are not really tired at all. Think of proposing to a milliner's apprentice going out to a tea-party, to take a little crotchet-work; or to an unhappy writer of newspaper articles, "just to keep up a nice chatty correspondence with half-a-dozen friends in the country!"

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

Bible Lesson Notes on "The Religion of Jesus."

I.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEACHING OF JESUS.

Christ's earliest designation that of "Teacher" (John iii. 2, Matt. iv. 23), and his words are called "a new teaching" (Mark i. 2). What, then, are the features of this new teaching?

1.—In outward form. *(a)* Proverbial, maxim-like, dealing in axioms, short, pithy, telling sentences, and easily remembered (Mark ii. 1; Matt. vii. 1 and 16; Mark viii. 35; Matt. v. 5, viii. 38; Luke ix. 62). Not the habit of Jesus to preach long sermons. *(b)* Parabolic "Placing beside." Truth in a picture. Everything Jesus teaches is "like." (Matt. xiii.—7 parables, and each is "like.") All poetry is "like."

2.—Its substance. *(a)* Negative, *not* ceremonial. Jesus laid no stress whatever on points of ritual, fasting, *forms* of worship, *places* of worship, the proper attitude for prayer, the eastward or any other position, the washing of hands, the paying of tithes, the wearing of phylacteries, etc. Note his attitude towards cleansings and the Sabbath. (See Mark vii. 6-15, ii. 18—22, 27—28). *Not* Theological. Theology the theory and science of Religion. Not to despise it. Clear thinking most necessary. But there may be

theory without practice and Theology without Religion. Jesus did not condemn Theology, but he concerned himself with Religion and practice. He gave no creed—never speculated about the nature of God, never said "It is absolutely necessary to have right opinions about Atonement, or Justification, or the Incarnation, or the Trinity. He never heard of these things, never mentions them, never attempted any definition of God, never laid down a scheme of doctrine. His doctrine of God is addressed to the heart. Gave no philosophical explanation of God, or sin, or pain. Such explanations may be useful, but they are not religion. *(b)* Positive.

1. It was Simple. 3. Spiritual.
2. Universal. 4. Humanitarian.

1.—Simple—the common people heard him gladly. No secret or difficult doctrines only for the initiated. There are teachers and poets who speak only to a small class. But the greatest poets, Shakespeare and Burns, speak to everybody. Jesus has no esoteric doctrines. Gave his deepest teaching to a Samaritan woman, who was a sinner.

2.—Universal—not Rules but Principles. Principles are for all men and all times. Rules are local and temporary. Loaf of bread and handful of wheat. Jesus teaching, dealing with Principles, expands with expanding life. Parable of the Fairy Tent in a Walnut Shell.

3.—Spiritual—Concerned itself with ideas and affections and motives, not with forms; made everything of a right condition of the heart. Inwardness is its essence. "Attend to conduct," said the Jews; "attend to the springs out of which conduct flows," said the Master.

4.—Humanitarian—The Golden Rule. Jesus made the service of man the service of God. He condemns Inhumanity as the greatest of sins. Parable of Good Samaritan. The final test will be humanitarian. (Matt. xxv. 31-46).

II.

THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF GOD.

The world has known three great conceptions of God, *i.e.*, the Pagan conception, Power; the Hebraic conception, Righteousness; and the Christian conception, Love.

Note Christ's *name* for God—"Father." Not an absolutely new name.

The old Hindoo name in Sanskrit—Dyaus-pitar The old Greek word—Zeus The old Roman word—Jupiter	The Heaven Father or all-Father, or Father of Gods and men.

But words mean more in one age than in another; they contain that which is put into them; they carry the thought and feeling of those who use them. So Father meant more to Jesus than to Isaiah, or Homer, or ancient Hindoos.

Our Teutonic ancestors had arrived at some conception of an all-Father. See their names for the days of the week. Sunday (Sun's day or worship); Monday (Moon's worship); Tuesday (Tuith, Tuisco, Duisco, the Heaven-Father); Wednesday (Wodin-Odin, the Windmover or Inspirer); Thursday (Thor's day); Friday (Freya, Spring, the Free One); Saturday (Seater, or Setter, or Planter, the God of the Seed Field and the Harvest).

This conception of God as Father, although heard before, belongs to Christ, since he made much of it, emphasized it, put more into it.

"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom."

Jesus did not attempt to prove the existence of God,—he assumed it. Took the faith in God which the world already had, and uplifted, enlarged, purified and *humanized* it. How do we know there is a God?

Parable of the blind child and the sun.

With Jesus God is not a King, a Great Artificer, a Judge, but a Father.

Some aspects of the Fatherhood of God as taught by Christ:—

1.—Universal. Father of all—not merely of the good, the clever, the educated, the baptized, but of all men—of sinners as well as saints.
Matt. v. 44; Matt. xvii. 10; Matt. ix. 10—13.
When we pray we say, not "*my*," but "*our* Father."

2.—Providential. Giver of earthly good.
Matt. vi. 26—34; Matt. ix. 29—31.

3.—Redemptive. Mighty to save. Luke xv.

4.—Educative. The Patient Teacher.
Mark iv. 26—29; Matt. xiii. 10—17.

Christ's doctrine of God has two great advantages—

(*a*) It avoids all abstruse theories. Simple, human, and appeals to the heart.

(*b*) It has a capacity for expansion in accordance with the growth of knowledge.

Fits alike the thought of God as a Creator, and the thought of God as an Evolutionist.

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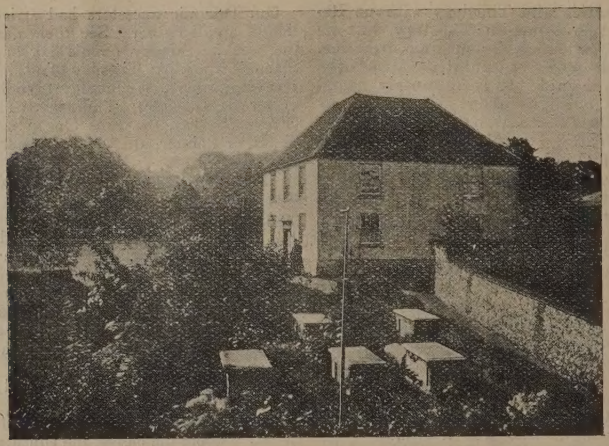


SAFFRON WALDEN (EXTERIOR).

Our Ancient Chapels.

No. XIX.—SAFFRON WALDEN.

The General Baptist Chapel, Saffron Walden, Essex, was founded in 1711 by Robert Cosens, gentleman, at that time Head Steward of Audley Palace, who purchased the residence in Hill Street, known as Chapel House, and converted part of it (west end) into a room for Divine services, held weekly. These services were continued from 1711 until the 5th August, 1792, when the congregation, with outside help from the London, Kent, and Sussex Baptist Churches, erected and opened the present building. The reasons assigned by Mr. Cosens for so doing are—because of exclusive, *i.e.*, Augustinian theology, which was so general in this district and throughout the Eastern Counties, against which he would provide "Gospell" teachings more in harmony with the nature and character of Almighty God and the broad inclusive teachings of "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," as set forth in the New Testament.

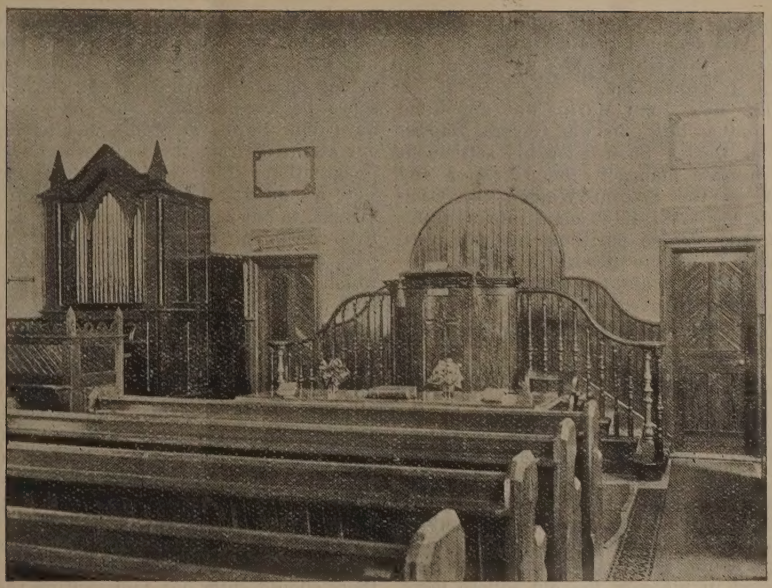
Robert Cosens was Chief Steward of Audley Palace at this time. Charles II., King of England, said of this palace, "It was too costly for a king to support: a subject might sustain (afford) it." Robert Cosens was well-educated, he was thoughtful, devout, liberal-minded, large-hearted, a descendent of William Shakespeare. This church is the third oldest Dissenting cause in Saffron Walden, and the oldest Baptist cause in this part of the Eastern Counties. For many years it was allied to Melbourn and Foulbourn in Cambridgeshire under one "Elder."

Robert Cosens died in 1728. Before his decease he endowed the church with £20 per year in support of the ministry, and £1 per year for the acting trustee.

The residence in Hill Street is for the use of the minister. In his will, and in the directions for carrying out his will, he desires that the "Gospell of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shall be preached twice every Lord's Day, and the bodies and souls of poor mortals be cared for, and that no man need perish for want of a Saviour, God having provided a Saviour for all." Armenian teaching.

The succession of "Elders," *i.e.*, pastors of this church, is as follows:—

i. Mr. Joseph Eedes, from 1728 to 1770.
ii. Mr. Thomas Barron, September, 1770, to January, 1791. (A noted medical man, upon whom I have written verses. — J. A. B.).
iii. Mr. Payn, supply one year, January, 1791, to December, 1791
iv. Rev. Stephen Philpot, 1792, to July, 1821. Supplies, August to December, 1821:



SAFFRON WALDEN (INTERIOR).

Messrs. Philip Squier, Taplin, Stevenson, Cundill.

v. Rev. J. Cundill, January, 1822, to December, 1825. Supplies, from January to June, 1826.

vi. Rev. O. Squier, from July, 1826, to June, 1832. Supplies, from July, 1832, to June, 1835: Messrs. Cooke, Cooper, Green, Latham, Rev. J. C. Means, Philp, Rev. Samuel Martin, Trowbridge, Bateman, Saint, Meek, Coupland, Barton, J. Briggs, Rev. B. Mardon, Moore, Buckland, Pound, Revs. John Marten and James Humphrey, whose oil-painting is in our museum.

vii. Rev. John Marten, July, 1835, to December, 1864.

viii. Rev. L. T. Badcock, April, 1865, to March, 1874.

ix. Rev. J. A. Brinkworth, March, 1875, to this date, May, 1904.

Average duration of each pastorate is to this date, 20 years.

With the settlement of the Rev. Stephen Philpot, a native of Kent, near Dover, an era of prosperity commenced. New efforts were made, funds were obtained, freehold site was purchased, present chapel erected, and opened 5th August, 1792. In 1793 it was mortgaged for £150, said mortgage was continued till 1821, when it was paid off. During Mr. Philpot's ministry of 29 years new teachings in theology were introduced—those of Arius—part of the worshippers were unwilling to receive them.

The descendants of Rev. Stephen Philpot have invariably continued their association with this church, *e.g.*, the great-grandson, S. P. Low, Esq., J.P., C.C., D.L., banker, Whitehall, London, S.W. Also F. Low, Esq., K.C., Temple, E.C.

During the pastorate of Rev. J. Cundill grave and serious troubles arose, and costly legal proceedings between the Elder of the church and the trustees of the endowment. They were terminated by the trustees buying out Mr. Cundill. Painful memories of this still survive. It was a disputation on doctrines all through.

In 1833 a most earnest invitation was extended by this church to Rev. Samuel Martin,

of Trowbridge, who was strongly inclined to accept it, but declined it after three months' consideration, through pressure put upon him to remain in Trowbridge.

1835. The Rev. John Martin was appointed "Elder" at that time; he was General Baptist minister at Deal. Soon after his settlement here he became manager, then director and chairman, of the Saffron Walden Gas Company, and converted it at once into a profitable concern. These positions he held until he departed from the town in 1865. His memory is revered and beloved. His mortal remains were interred in our cemetery in August, 1880. Rev. R. Spears conducted the interment.

1873-4. The cause was brought very low. From January to March, 1875, the chapel was cleaned and renovated, and re-opened by the present "Elder," 27th March, 1875. A beautiful new pulpit was erected in 1879, in pitch-pine, at a cost of £52 10s. Further alterations were made in 1882 in the body of the building, whilst in 1890 the whole interior was gutted. Foundations were digged out, under-pinning done, new floors, seating, dado, in pitch-pine, were erected in place of the old square pews, windows removed, walls coloured, new vestibule, vestry enlarged, baptistry re-modelled; also hot-water heating apparatus, by Messrs. Hope, Lionel Street, Birmingham, fixed, the whole is paid for. A pipe organ was erected in 1885 by the pastor.

J. A. Brinkworth.

The Life is the Light.

We are sometimes too honest to take that which belongs to us. In our fear lest we may seem to accept doctrines that we do not believe, we often refrain from using language in its natural sense, and stating facts just as they are, because the language has been by others misinterpreted and the facts misused. Now, if there is in all Christendom any body of religious people who have a right to make much of the person of Jesus and to cherish his spirit and invoke his influence, it is those who believe that in all natural ways he showed how the Word was made flesh, how it dwells among us, and how in those who received the Word it shines in characters full of grace and truth.

They who have called Jesus God have taken him out of the range of our human sympathy; but we need not therefore lose the Jesus who is our human friend, and who may in a real sense be a companion and helper. Others have done harm, we think, and have diverted our attention from the real Jesus by grotesque imaginations about what might happen if he were a banker, a merchant, or an editor. It is a shock to our sensibilities to think of one who lives in the spirit, even in our own time—some poet or prophet of the soul—turning to tasks which are discordant, foreign to his nature, and which he could not undertake without a betrayal to his real self.

The full power of the human Jesus comes not to those who ask, What would he do if he were in my place as an editor, a lawyer, a physician, or a statesman? but who ask, What should I do in my place, with my work, duty, and pleasure before me, if I were moved by the spirit that was in him? What would be the effect if into a room filled with happy men and women, dining, talking, laughing, and discussing high themes, with the mixture of gaiety and gravity which mark such occasions, there should enter one representing the Master of men, not as he is now after two thousand years in the world of light, but as he was in the days when he went about doing good? No picture of him ever painted suggests to us the real presence that we imagine. Grave and dignified, and yet benign, cheerful, strong, and gentle, with an air of wisdom and suggestion of power, he would attract all eyes and win all hearts. Speaking to any company of men and women called by our name and inspired by the spirit of our Church, we believe that he would win approval and compel assent. With the light that has been shining so many centuries the human mind has been prepared for his message in such a way that, whether with gentle gravity he should rebuke sin or by his winged words should awaken holy desire, he would charm every one by his gracious manner, and would cause every one with loving reverence to turn toward him the better side of his mind and heart.

This kind of influence has had power over some of the greatest thinkers of our time, over even those who have rejected Christianity and turned their faces away from the Church. It is the influence of the higher humanity win-

ning that which is lower, less near perfection, more under the dominion of wayward desires and untamed impulses. It is the influence of an ideal of character made real and personal by the aid of the affections, the imagination, the dramatic power of the human soul. As God is to every man his noblest ideal of being, so Jesus, to every one who loves and trusts him, is a creation of his own, his own thought of perfection represented in an ideal form. But it is Jesus not masquerading in some character which does not befit him, but as he was when he lived and walked in the flesh. The mystical basis of the life of Jesus must always be the pedestal on which the loving imagination erects the figure of its ideal man. Constantly the glowing ideal must be corrected by reference to the records which suggest what he was and what he said. It has been the joyful task of the men and women of our faith to bring before the world an ideal of the Son of man which is winning its way in all churches, and is now acknowledged by many not of our faith as being our best contribution to the religious life and thought of the new century. C. B.

Notes and Jottings.

The May meetings have been in full swing during the past month, but they have done little more than maintain a rather low average of interest. In some ways this is rather remarkable in view of the number of controversial questions which are before the country. The Educational policy of the Government has naturally received its fair share of attention, and Chinese Labour and the Licensing Bill have each heard the thunder of well-deserved anathemas. But it looks sometimes as though the great pre-occupation of the Nonconformist bodies with matters of this kind were in danger of drawing off their attention from questions of grave spiritual import and from any effective dealing with the religious perplexities of the modern world.

We miss, certainly, in many of the speeches and addresses, an adequate recognition of the need of a living theology and more elasticity of method. The fact is staring us in the face that neither the thought nor the worship of the churches is touching the lives of masses of our population with any quickening power. We speak of the wave of materialism which is passing over society, and we find in it a reason for many of our failures; but when it has spent its force, people will not flow back to the old grooves of habit and belief and all things be as they were. It is the traditional religious explanation of the world and history and human life which has broken down, and all our cautious compromises of thought cannot restore it to its old pre-eminence. The problem that confronts all the churches is that of giving actuality to theology, of bringing it into close contact with the realities of human thought.

With this there may have to go considerable changes in religious methods. Here speculation becomes a little difficult, but one thing seems certain, that the laity must have better opportunities than exist at present for the discussion of religious topics, and for contributing the results of their own thought and experience to the common faith. For many men religion has become too much a matter of fixed routine and clerical dictation, and this is a remark that applies with equal force to Nonconformity and the Church of England. To listen but not to speak is the traditional attitude. The experiments, which have been tried in some places, of giving opportunities for the asking of questions or the suggesting of difficulties, when as it were the minister and the laity think together, are full of interest. Certainly all well-considered experiments of this kind, however much they may startle our prejudices, should win our cordial sympathy. The theology of the future is likely to reflect the average mind, and to be, to a less degree than in the past, the concern of a professional class. For this purpose discussion is invaluable, and may be regarded rightly as a religious activity of a high order.

We have read few books recently which are more helpful and constructive than "The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit," by the late Auguste Sabatier. In its English dress it is the latest volume of the Theological Translation Library. Broad in its

historical survey, and strong in its intellectual grasp, it has the French gift of clear analysis and brilliant statement. The style loses something of its lightness and charm in the hands of the translator, but it carries the reader along and is quite refreshing in its freedom from theological technicalities. Professor Jean Réville has written a memorial sketch, and our only complaint is that it is far too short.

It is refreshing to turn away sometimes from the problems of the modern world to the pure springs of child-like piety. To all who can put criticism aside and enjoy the simple and fervid emotions of the early Franciscan literature we recommend the *Sacrum Commercium* in the charming edition just issued in the Temple Classics. Perhaps there was hardly need for another English translation of this primitive allegory, which reveals so much of the spirit and aim of St. Francis himself, but it has given us the delight of a short rhapsody in its praise by M. Paul Sabatier, and of a longer essay of appreciation by Canon Rawnsley. With all these riches we are well content; besides, the earlier translation by Mr. Montgomery Carmichael is too bulky for the pocket.

Bearing Witness.

A PAPER READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GUILD UNION,

By MR. H. P. GREG.

I propose to limit myself as much as possible to the value of Guild life in bearing witness to the spirit of Christ. Now, perhaps many members of a Guild are most anxious to do good, to be a credit to the Guild, to be useful citizens, to be a force for uprightness in the society in which they move, but they feel many shortcomings; they may have no gift of speech to enable them to reprove wrong-doing, to urge their companions on in the right path without incurring the reproach of being a prig; they may have an awkward knack of doing the right thing at the wrong moment; they may find their kind intentions misunderstood, and their kind acts sometimes unkindly received. Do not be discouraged. Know that every good word, every kind act, every noble intention, directly helps *you*, and by that very help you become a greater force for good. But I want to point out that words and acts, though important, are really but occasional exhibitions of something far more important, namely, the spirit within us. Why are we so fascinated with the story of Jesus? Is it because of what he said, or what he did? Has not many a noble soul breathed beautiful words and done noble deeds without affecting us to anything like the same degree? The fascination of Christ is found not in what he said, or did, but in what he was, what he is. His words and acts were but occasional exhibitions of his *being*. Has it ever struck you how small a part of our being our words and acts are? What a large part of our being is never exhibited to the world, but is contained in our thoughts, our inner consciousness. And it is to this I want to direct your attention. Beneath a placid surface there is often a strife unseen, unknown by our intimate friends, still less unseen and unknown by the world. Now it is our duty to endeavour within ourselves to purify our thoughts, to see that in this strife below the surface, the noble thoughts conquer the ignoble, the pure drive out the impure; this it is that makes the difference between seeming a Christian and being a Christian; this it is which enables the presence of a truly great man to send an influence forth, which is felt though no word is uttered, no act performed, which is so keenly felt that we say that we are the better merely for being in that man's presence. Such an influence all keenly felt who were privileged to be present at the communion service conducted by Dr. Martineau, at the opening of Manchester College in the beautiful chapel, in October, 1893. Now, how can we cultivate this unseen but most powerfully-felt influence? Well, the first necessity is that our minds, our thinking capacity, shall be well employed. A mind that is allowed to be empty and unemployed naturally turns to base, ignoble, unworthy thoughts, just as a soil that is uncultivated naturally grows profitless weeds. It is a law that all progress depends on effort, and it is an effort which we must make to see that our thoughts, which form the largest part of our being, are such as make for righteousness. And it is here where this Guild movement can do untold good, for an effort made in company with others is easier than when made alone. Besides, the Guild movement can give occupation for thought, and thought of the noblest nature. Each member can employ his thinking capacity for some time in each day in endeavouring to think out how he can individually help the Guild, and how the Guild can collectively foster the higher life of each individual. And in thinking out any line of action, look all round the question, consider it on every side, and when the question has been well thought out decide on that line which conscience, the intuitive force which God has planted in each human being to decide between right and wrong, approves. In your humdrum routine of daily life give thought, abundant thought, so that even when daily toil appears but a ceaseless repetition of the same process, each time the process is repeated it may be better done than the time before. This gives interest to the daily toil, and this interest in its turn affords occupation for the mind, and brings home the truth that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well. Then take every opportunity for what is called self-improvement. Regard this as a duty to God, namely, the duty of every man to improve himself, which is merely another way of expressing that you must take every opportunity of increasing the chances of keeping the mind employed on healthy thoughts. If there is a good lecture which you can attend, form a party and go to it. Do not hesitate

because it is inconvenient, because you might be able to get more amusement elsewhere, because the subject does not interest you. Look at it rather in this light, is it not likely that the lecture will give us something to think about, give our minds a wider field of occupation? And when you have been to the lecture, let the mind revert to it, analyse what fresh view it has opened, where the information appeared incomplete, what craving for further knowledge it has created. I venture to say that any lecture attended in such a frame of mind, even though at the time after exhaustive consideration it seems barren of result, in after years it will come back to you as the starting point of some fresh line of thought which has been of use to you in the complicated web of cause and effect by which our life in this world is woven. Then in connection with this cultivation of the mind let me recommend you to take up hobbies. It is well that your mind should be largely occupied with your business in life and with the many deep problems which will inevitably arise as the cultivation of the mind proceeds, religious, theological, philosophical, political economy, social and ethical problems; but the mind, like the body, wants recreation, and like the body, it finds the best recreation not in idleness and vacuity, but in change. Therefore let the mind find its recreation in a hobby, and see that whatever that hobby is, you aim at excellence in it. If it be poultry farming let your fowls be the best, your pen the cleanest; if it be a collection of stamps, coins or stones, let your collection be as complete as possible and as well arranged as possible. If this question of hobbies is a new one and you have no hobby, and do not know where to look for one, let me recommend botany. In the beautiful country around you have endless opportunity, the text-books are many and good and cheap. It can be pursued in company. Several members of the Guild can unite and take long country walks, and at every step you can find food for thought. And the study of botany has no rival, I think, in its educational effect on the power of thinking. For it requires exact thinking, careful observation, and it is always opening afresh the mind to the beauties of nature, the wondrous working of the Creator. Thus cultivating the mind, giving it useful occupation, you will be surprised how it influences your daily action, your common speech. Your conversation will no longer be absorbed in cricket and football, an absorption useful enough until something better takes its place, you will realise the truth of the saying, that the pen is mightier than the sword, which is merely another way of stating that thought is more important than action, because thought precedes action, and no useful action is performed without much careful and laborious thought. We once had an awful smash at my mill, and but for the extraordinary promptitude of the engineer there might have been a serious loss of life. Afterwards I asked him how it was he did exactly the right thing at the right moment in the right way. His reply was a lesson to me. He said, "Well, it was this way. I have a good deal of time here just watching these engines, and I keep thinking over to myself what I should do if this or that happens, and then when it does happen I know what to do." How simple! But what has all this to do with Guild life bearing witness to the spirit of Christ? Well, the Guild is made up of individuals, and the better the individuals the better the Guild, and the more influential for good is the Guild life. These individuals of a Guild will become better by cultivating the mind, by developing the inner man, by cherishing the spirit. For it is along these lines we gain communion with God, that we obtain fellowship with noble souls of all ages and all races, that we realise that the things that are seen are temporal, and that the things that are unseen are eternal. And each one of you must cultivate the mind, develop the inner man, cherish the spirit for himself; no one else can do it, it is a personal matter between you and God. You can help others, and others can help you, but the work, the effort, must be made by you; you cannot hand over the work to any other living being. Therefore, quietly and steadfastly take up this work, and help others to take up this work, of seeing that the mind is kept employed on lofty, noble, pure thoughts, so that the mind may be a fruitful source of lofty, right actions, and by this means you and your Guild will most effectively, though unostentatiously, bear witness to the spirit of Christ, the loftiest, noblest, purest the world has known.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

*Youth and Age.**

By FRANCES POWER COBBE.

Youth has hope and faith. Old age has charity. In youth we love up. In age we love down. In youth admiration is the key-note of our affections,—whether it be for physical, mental, or moral beauty. In age pity and sympathy are the mainsprings of our tenderness. The judgments of youth are hard and hasty. The judgments of age are indulgent, hesitating. In youth affection moves the hands to caress and the lips to kiss. In age it only inspires the tongue to speak kind words. In youth we can hate our enemies. In age we either despise or dread them. Youth has anger. Age scarcely churns up anything stronger than annoyance. In youth our joys are sunshine. In age such joys as are left us are moonlight, reflected from the joys of those dear to us. In youth we pine to receive more love. In age we wish we had more love to give. Youth makes confidants and insists that those it loves should know all its faults and follies. Age has no such imprudent tendencies, and never justifies Rochefoucauld's saying, "On aime mieux dire

* From the *Spectator*, May 14th.—Our readers will be glad to see this little essay by Miss Cobbe, almost her last literary effort, and sent by her to Lady Battersea.

du mal de soi-même que de n'en point parler." In youth the mind is agile. In age the mind is stiff like the body. It can still walk straight ahead; but it cannot jump or dance or twist about swiftly. In youth our animal spirits are raised by a variety of duties and pleasures in rapid succession. We pass from one to another joyously excited by the bustle and stir of change. In age we are distressed by being hurried from one occupation of our thoughts or hands to another; and our spirits droop instead of rising under the sense of our inability to flit from business to business, or even from pleasure to pleasure. In youth our memory for what we see and hear depends on the vividness of the impression made upon us, and (as all impressions are then fresh and new) many things are vividly recorded. In age the recollections of youth remain sharply cut, and also those of later events (but they are few) in which our feelings have been interested as keenly as in youth. But the many things in which we did not take equal interest have not left much impress, and are forgotten. The moral life of youth is like mountain climbing. It is all ups and downs, over untried paths and slippery places. We make many false steps, and sometimes we slip back and fall prostrate and lie a while with our lips in dust. But again we rise and struggle onward and uphill, and as we gain the heights we have glimpses of heaven overhead. The moral life of age is all on a beaten road and in the ruts of habit. There is very little struggle and perhaps no conscious slips or falls, for custom alone and regard for the consistency of our characters are generally sufficient without any effort or merit to keep us walking straight along the flat familiar way. But we have no longer the intense experiences of divine help; we see no longer the vast horizons of heaven and earth beheld in the hours of vision from the mountain tops. The griefs of youth bring despair, for all life lies before us in which we shall suffer from them. The griefs of age bring desolation; but we know there is only a little time in which we shall feel them.

I do not know of any way so sure of making others happy as of being so one's self.—*Sir Arthur Helps.*

The Duty of the Churches to Outsiders.*

(Continued.)

I would suggest then that the first need for a revival of religious impulse amongst the masses is not the elaboration of any set scheme, or an increase of organisations, but the growth within ourselves of earnestness and sympathy. We need, first of all, a strong desire to be of some service to those who are less fortunately placed than ourselves, and then we need to bring ourselves into close personal contact with them, in order that we may have our sympathies aroused, and that we may gain the necessary knowledge of their lives, without which effectual help cannot be given. I am convinced myself that if only these qualities of earnestness and sympathy can be developed in the Churches, the equipments and organisations will soon follow.

And here it may be said that the conditions of sympathy mean that all consciousness of social superiority, of class distinctions, of repulsion at what is at first disagreeable to sight and sound and touch, must be resolutely fought against from the very beginning. There is nothing which the average working man dreads and detests more than a person who poses as his superior, and who has condescended to open up communications in order to "do him good." If I may be excused for speaking personally, I can say, from my own experience amongst the very poor, that the benefit is by no means all on one side,—it is reciprocal. Just as we are taught that it is a more blessed thing to give than to receive, so the contact with people who are struggling to lead the good life against tremendous odds, is a strong stimulus to one's own efforts and aspirations. Think of a working man who has given up intoxicating drink because he found that it ruined his domestic happiness,—think of this man, suffering perhaps from a terrible craving for the drink, subjected to the jeers and sarcasms of his fellow-workmen, sometimes—as I know—to ill-usage and blows, and yet this man holds on the path of self-denial which he has chosen. I don't know that there are many lives which are more *heroic* than this; and such cases are by no means uncommon.

Perhaps a few considerations which arise from a very elementary knowledge of the facts may serve to bring this inadequate paper to a close. There can be no doubt that working people are more likely to attend a mission hall than a church. The hall is more in accordance with their daily surroundings; they feel more at ease; they are not so much afraid to sit down in the very poor garments which are often the best they can obtain. The form which religious work will therefore necessarily take amongst the poor will probably be that known as mission work. But there is no reason why a mission hall should not be made as attractive as possible by means of pictures, flowers, and other objects of beauty. Perhaps the feature which needs most care and attention is the music. Poor folk are more impressed by music and singing than by anything else, and the very best talent that the Church possesses should be turned in

* A Paper read before the Essex Church Guild, Feb. 10, 1904.

this direction. There is no more reason to believe in a cheap and common class of music for poor people than in a special slum theology. If reverence and admiration and hope are there lying dormant, they can be aroused most effectually by the most elevated forms of art and of teaching. Only extreme simplicity is a necessary condition. The man of learning and refinement is by no means out of place in a mission hall. But he must add yet another to his numerous accomplishments, viz., the power of understanding and of being understood by the people whom he desires to raise. Above all things it is desirable to create in these down-trodden people a divine thirst for goodness, knowledge and beauty. They need a wholesome discontent, firstly with themselves, and secondly with their surroundings, which will drive them on to the first effort for improvement. They need to be stimulated to *think for themselves*, and therefore the mere presence and example of a gifted but thoroughly sympathetic person exercises an uplifting influence from its very commencement.

I am inclined to think that services and addresses should be sometimes varied by appeals to the *eye*, as well as to the *ear*. The use of a lantern might assist. There are well-considered objections to this on the general ground that it tends to distract the mind from those deeper emotions which it is the object of a service to draw forth. But if the pictures shown were appropriate, I think the lantern might reach many who would otherwise remain callous. In one's occasional visits to so-called High Churches, it is pleasing to see coloured pictures hung up, even although the subjects chosen are of a morbid character. Why should not reproductions of the very best pictures be similarly exhibited in the mission halls of Nonconformity?

I fear that this paper has only touched the fringe of the subject. There is the important question of what topics should be treated in public discourses. The question of religion and of human life must be regarded from the standpoint of the workers themselves, rather than from our own. It follows that those who occupy the pulpits and platforms of the future will have to address themselves more and more to the attempt to solve those problems which press most heavily upon the labouring class. Such questions as lack of employment and better housing will have to be courageously faced by religious men if religion is to succeed in asserting its claims upon the whole of life. I hope that even if the meagre suggestions herein mentioned are too vague for practical realisation, they may at least stimulate a discussion which shall atone for their defectiveness.

C. T. FOLKERD.

A Parable.

Once on a Saturday night a minister bent wearily over a half-finished sermon. There had been a domestic revolution, and the "help" had deserted; the weather was hot; the minister was tired. As he worked hopelessly at his sermon, he heard in the chamber above a still more weary wife trying to soothe a restless infant. The minister braced himself to his task, sure that his duty lay before him. But, yielding at last, he dropped his slow-moving pen, and, going to the chamber above, took the crying child. The exhausted mother fell asleep; and the child, feeling the soothing touch of a new hand, also fell asleep in the father's arms. Then, sitting in the peaceful stillness of the twilight, he found his sermon coming with a freshness and power which he had missed in his weary strife. So that which began as a wearisome sacrifice ended in refreshment and success. All of which is a parable of life.

News from the Field.

With the opening of summer Sunday School anniversaries come round and the young folk therein break out into cantatas and flower services and services of song. At *Halifax* the annual sermons were preached by the *Rev. Attwell Binns*, of Scarborough, the collection amounting to £25. At *Heywood* the preacher was the *Rev. J. Stead*, of Park Lane, and the collection reached the large sum of £52. *Oldham* secured the services of the *Rev. J. Wood*, of Birmingham, and the *Rev. C. C. Coe* preached at *Harwich*. At *Newhall Hill, Birmingham*, the *Rev. J. Worsley Austin* gave his services. At *Rawtenstall* the sermons were preached by the *Rev. R. McGee*, of Colne, the collection being the largest on record—£47, and at *Kentish Town* the *Rev. G. Critchley, B.A.*, conducted successful services. Anniversary services have also been held at *Leeds, Accrington, Scarborough*, and other places. Whit-week would also be celebrated in Lancashire by the usual Sunday School procession.

A welcome meeting has been held in connection with the settlement of the *Rev. T. Paxton*, at *Newhall Hill, Birmingham*, when the *Rev. J. E. Carpenter* and *Joseph Wood* gave suitable addresses. We are glad to hear that Mr. Paxton enters upon his new duties with much hope. The *Rev. J. Weatherall, M.A.*, has also received an enthusiastic welcome at *Bolton*. Mr. Weatherall enters upon a well-cultivated and fruitful field. A worthy successor of worthy men, may he keep up a noble tradition.

After a pastorate of 16 years the *Rev. W. Harrison* has resigned the pulpit of *Stalybridge* Church. *Mr. Dawtrey, B.A.*, of Manchester College, Oxford, has accepted an invitation to become assistant minister at *Upper Chapel, Sheffield*.

At *Newcastle-on-Tyne* a numerously-signed requisition has been presented to the *Rev. Frank Wotten* asking him to reconsider his resignation, and assuring him of the hearty goodwill of the congregation. At *Stannington* the same course has been adopted towards the resignation of the *Rev. Iden Payne*, and we are glad to hear that in both cases it is likely that the resignations will be withdrawn.

It is with great regret the friends of the *Mansford Street Mission* received the resignation of the *Rev. John Ellis* on account of the breakdown of his wife's health. Mr. Ellis's two years at Mansfield have been full of the most encouraging labour, but the sanitary conditions of Bethnal Green make residence there a severe trial to health, and desirable as it is from many points of view that the minister should live on the spot, it may be questionable whether the gain is worth the risk. We trust Mr. and Mrs. Ellis will find health and happiness in their new sphere.

We hear encouraging things from *Crewe*, where for some time the chapel has been closed. With its large intelligent artisan population there ought to be a flourishing mission at Crewe.

The *South-East Wales Unitarian Society* held its annual meetings at *Aberdare* on Monday, May 2nd. The sermon was preached by the *Rev. E. Gwilym Evans*, of *Chesterfield*, after which the business meeting, presided over by *Lieut.-Colonel Thomas Phillips*, was held. At the evening meeting addresses on the "Unitarian's Message" was given by the *Revs. R. J. Jones*, *W. Whitaker*, *B.A.*, *D. J. Williams*, and *James Harwood*, *B.A.*

The *Northumberland and Durham Association* held its spring conference at *Stockton*, on Monday, May 10th, when an interesting paper was read by *Mr. Charles Bell*, of *Redcar*, on "The Unitarian Church, its Message and its Mission." Resolutions against the Chinese Labour Ordinance and Licensing Bill were unanimously adopted, and also a resolution of sympathy to the *Rev. J. C. Street*, of *Shrewsbury*, who was to have taken part in the proceedings, but who, owing to a breakdown in health, has been compelled to cancel all his engagements. We are glad to know that Mr. Street, who has been staying at the Ashover Hydro, Derbyshire, is much benefited by the change, and although far from well, is beginning to take up work again. Let him be content to "hasten slowly," and refuse all outside engagements for some time to come The frequent failure in health of many of our more active ministers is a serious matter, arising as it does from overwork and then anxiety to serve the churches There are men among us who cannot spare the time to be "Mondayish," so full are they of engagements—lectures, sermons, meetings and conferences, and then they have to decline half the invitations that are sent them. It was to this over-pressure, not on the part of their own congregations, but of the churches in general, Mr. Beard and Dr. Crosskey succumbed. The moral is obvious. Don't work the willing horse too much.

The proposal to celebrate the jubilee of the *Home Missionary College*, *Manchester*, by the erection of permanent buildings in Manchester, is being severely criticised, and a petition signed by ministers and laymen has been circulated deprecating the scheme It is urged that the Home Missionary College should be amalgamated with Manchester College, Oxford, that the erection of new buildings at Manchester would render permanent a lamentable duplication, and the representatives of the two colleges should meet in conference to endeavour to bring about amalgamation, or if not amalgamation, some scheme of co-operation by which the present waste of resources might be remedied.

We regret to announce the death of *Mr. J. P. Thomasson*, of Bolton, at the age of 63. He was the son of Thomas Thomasson, the friend and munificent helper of Cobden. One of the great class of English manufacturers who benefited by Free Trade, he sought to fulfil Cobden's ideal of families of manufacturers who would develop their influence around their workshops in the great industrial centres, and exercise their stewardship in their own communities. Mr. Thomasson was educated at the Pestalozzian School, at Worksop, Nottinghamshire, and was a worthy disciple of that system as an enthusiast for education. He was a Unitarian in faith, a generous supporter of our Bolton Church, and an earnest and strenuous upholder of the principle of the non-intervention of the State in religion For over 30 years he was a munificent contributor to the funds of the Liberation Society, following in that respect in the steps of his father, a contributor from the Society's earliest days. Sometimes, notwithstanding his deafness, he took part in the Society's gatherings where his quiet, genial presence was always welcome. His benefactions to Bolton were many and generous, including a gift to the School Board of 100 scholarships of the annual value of £25 each, tenable for three years; a Board School costing £10,000; The Mere Hall Estate as a museum and recreation ground; £5000 for additional land for the grammar school; and many others, all calculated to promote the educational, social and religious welfare of the people. His wife, a niece of John Bright, survives; and he leaves a son, Mr. Franklin Thomasson, Liberal candidate for Accrington, and a daughter, Mrs Coe.

Guild News.

We have received the examiner's awards in three of the subjects suggested for essays. The number of competitors in each case is considerably below last year, and in the light of the experience gained the Council will doubtless reconsider the whole matter. The promotion of religious study is so important that we trust some scheme may be devised which will win the support of our Guilds generally, and be put by them into operation. In the New Testament subject there were only ten essays sent in and the examiner placed them in the following order:—1 F. G. Jackson, Leeds; 2 Jessie Cobbett, Norwich. About the first the examiner's remark is "good, and quite worthy of the first prize." On "The Life and Times of Priestley," nine essays were submitted. Of these the six at the top of the list receive prizes in the following order:—1 Mabel Colson, Leicester; 2 F. G. Jackson, Leeds; 3 C. W. Finch, Norwich; 4 Bernard Royce, Leicester; 5 Alice E. Hakesby, Birmingham; 6 A. May, Fisburn, Leeds. The examiner's report on the essays based on Channing's "Perfect Life," is as follows:—1 Alfred Thompson, Bethnal Green; 2 F. G. Jackson, Leeds; 3 Bessie Bone, Norwich. We shall make a full report next month.